

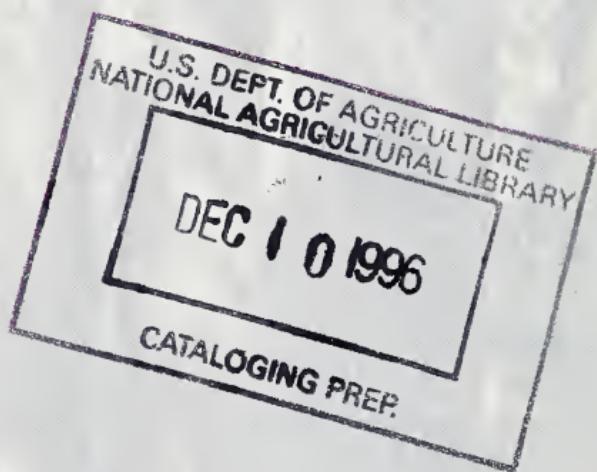
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search tural Areas

Southern Forest Experiment Station



Research Natural Areas—

Research Natural Areas (RNA's) are lands that are conserved for research, monitoring, and education and to help in maintaining biological diversity. The USDA Forest Service has permanently protected more than 250 RNA's in a national network that contains unique ecosystems as well as a representative group of ecosystem types, including forest, aquatic-riparian, shrubland, grassland, and alpine habitats.



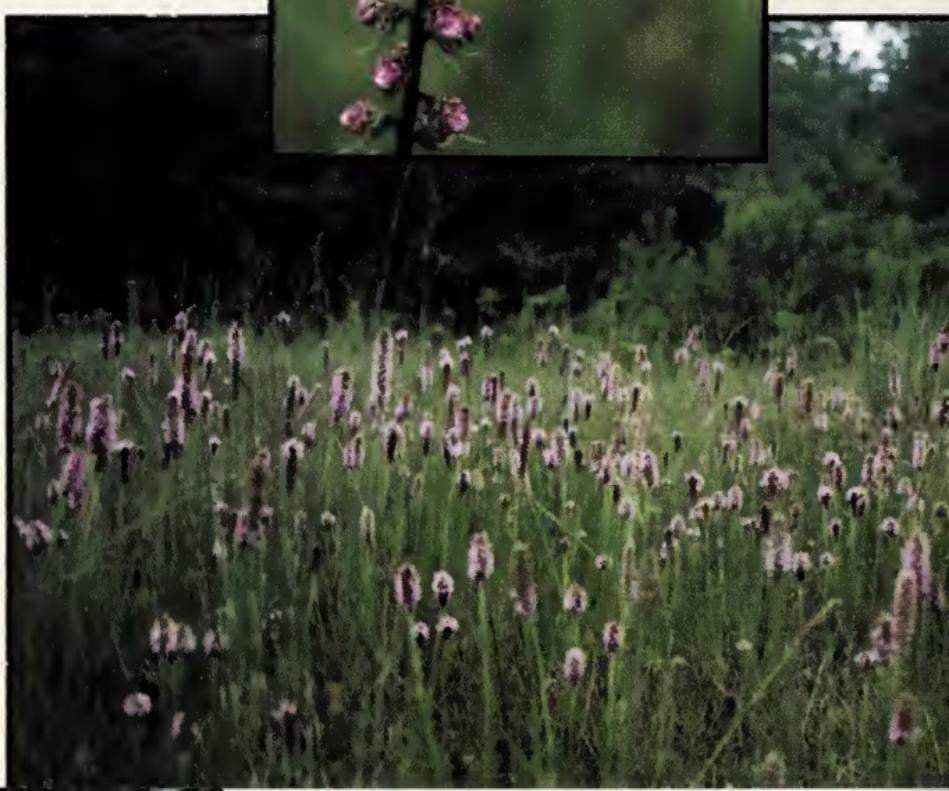
What are they?



■ RNA's can provide habitat for rare plants and animals that need special protection.



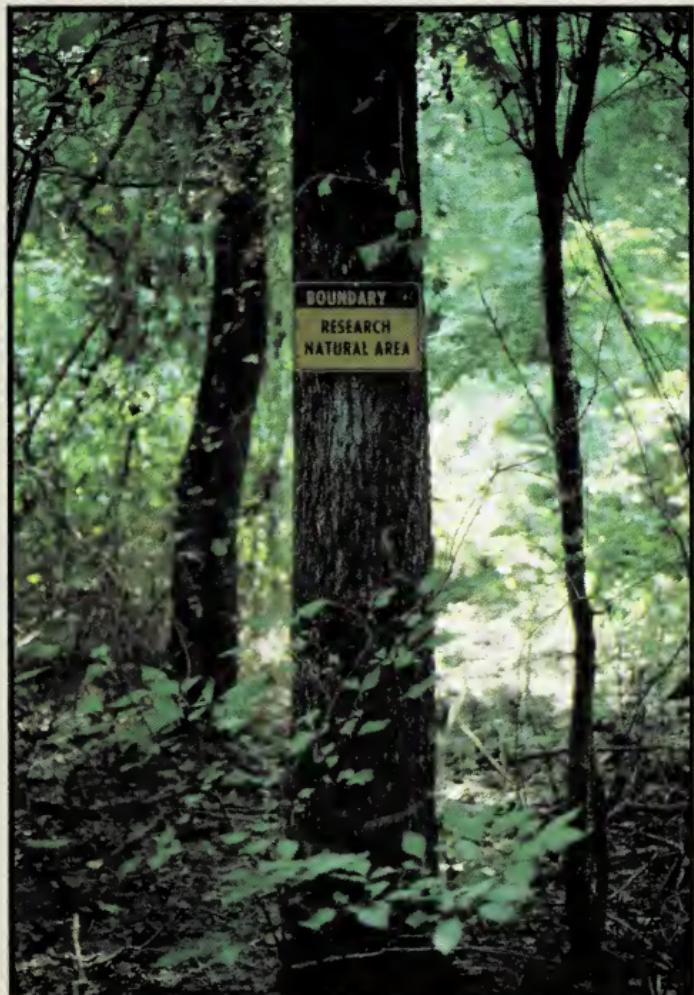
■ RNA's help to preserve the best remaining examples of pristine or relatively undisturbed natural communities for future generations. In addition, they provide sites for research and study today.



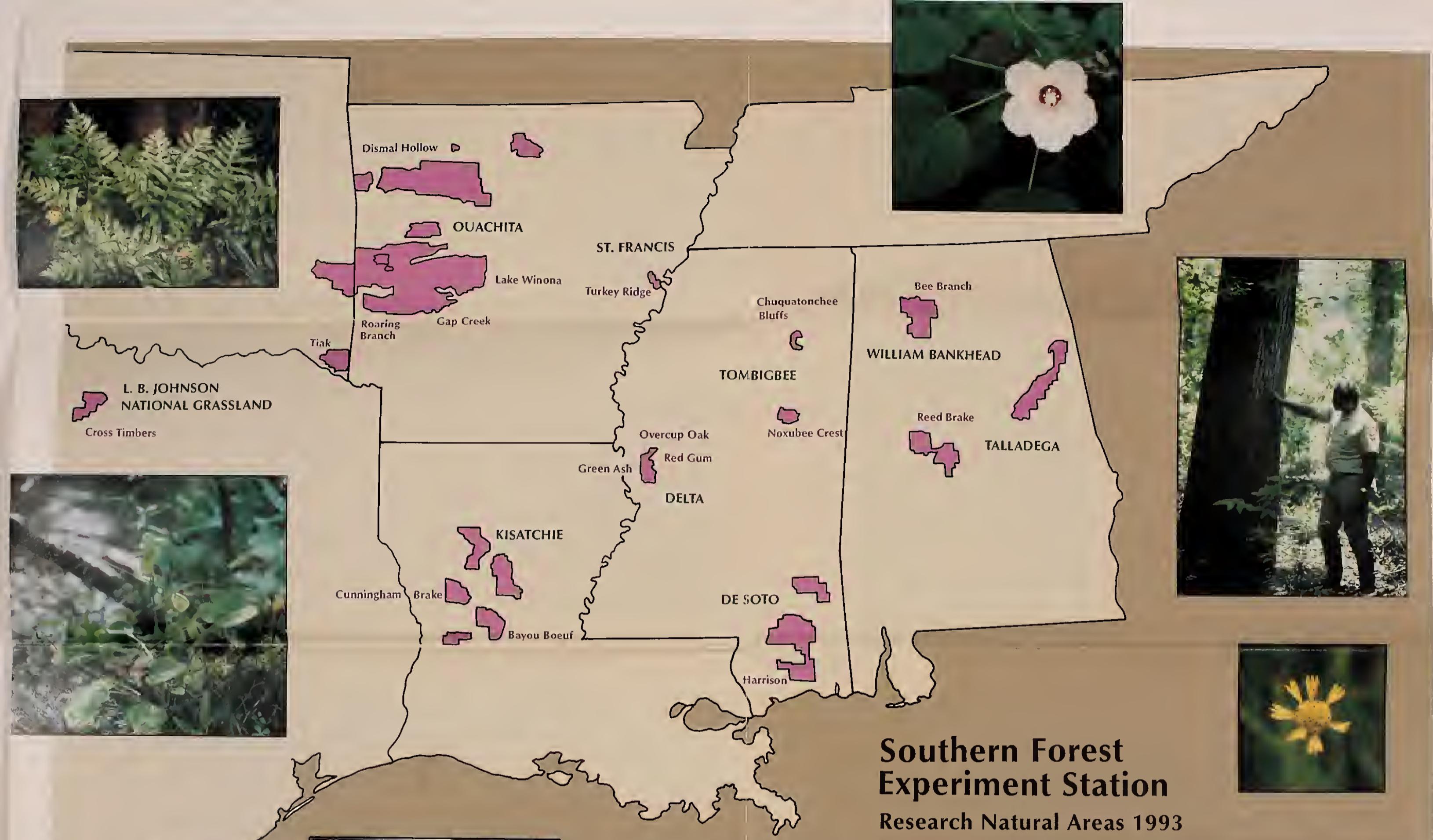
RNA Establishment

Nominations for new RNA's can come from anyone, within or outside of the Forest Service, and are sent to the appropriate Forest Supervisor and Station Director.

- *Eighteen RNA's are established in the 7 States of the Southern Forest Experiment Station, and more than 20 candidates are being evaluated.*



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Southern Forest Experiment Station Research Natural Areas 1993

| Area Name | National Forest | State | Acres | Date Established |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|------------------|
| Bano de Oro | Caribbean | PR | 1,840 | 1975 |
| Bayou Boeuf | Kisatchie | LA | 737 | 1949 |
| Bee Branch | William Bankhead | AL | 128 | 1962 |
| Chuquatonchee Bluffs | Tombigbee | MS | 216 | 1991 |
| Cross Timbers | L. B. Johnson National Grassland | TX | 170 | 1977 |
| Cunningham Brake | Kisatchie | LA | 1,731 | 1990 |
| Dismal Hollow | Ozark | AR | 2,077 | 1990 |
| Gap Creek | Ouachita | AR | 1,125 | 1990 |
| Green Ash | Delta | MS | 70 | 1943 |
| Harrison | De Soto | MS | 94 | 1989 |
| Lake Winona | Ouachita | AR | 240 | 1977 |
| Noxubee Crest | Tombigbee | MS | 536 | 1990 |
| Overcup Oak | Delta | MS | 40 | 1943 |
| Red Gum | Delta | MS | 40 | 1943 |
| Reed Brake | Talladega | AL | 59B | 1975 |
| Roaring Branch | Ouachita | AR | 330 | 1969 |
| Tiak | Ouachita | AR | 199 | 1990 |
| Turkey Ridge | St. Francis | AR | 400 | 1988 |



The Nature Conservancy, State heritage commissions, and the Natural Area Association are some of the cooperators that assist in identifying and establishing RNA's.

RNA candidates must be recommended in the Forest Plan, after an ecological assessment.

Each candidate area is evaluated, and an Establishment Record is prepared for candidates that meet RNA requirements.

After review, the establishment record is sent to the Chief of the Forest Service, who establishes RNA's.

Use of RNA's

Use of RNA's by responsible scientists and educators is encouraged.



Researchers from the Forest Service, universities, and elsewhere use RNA's for long-term monitoring and to help understand the effects of resource management practices.



Educators use RNA's for supervised activities such as field trips for upper-level and graduate students. Members of native plant societies and other conservation groups visit RNA's.



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